

**Washington, DC** - Today, **U.S. Rep. Brad Miller (D-NC)** unveiled Congress's first Community College Caucus to an approving crowd of nearly 200 community college presidents and trustees from around the country, gathered in Washington this week for their annual association convention.

Under the direction of Miller, the bi-partisan caucus was formed to emphasize the important and distinctive role that community colleges play in the American education system and educate Members of Congress about the challenges many of these institutions face.

"Community colleges are the cornerstone of our new economy," **Miller** said. "Every year, one adult North Carolinian in eight takes a community college course. I wanted to start the Community College Caucus to help educate folks in Washington about the good work our community colleges do back home."

Community college officials around North Carolina have lined up in support of this new initiative.

"The North Carolina Community College System, along with our sister institutions from across America, applaud Congressman Miller for his leadership in putting together a group who will champion our cause on Capitol Hill," **North Carolina Community College System President Martin Lancaster** said. "There is a growing awareness in Washington that community colleges continue to be the engine that is driving economic growth in this country. As a former Member of Congress, I know the importance of having a voice as respected as Brad's to be out front in promoting awareness of issues that are so essential to the fulfillment of our mission."

"The Community College Caucus is a great example of Congressman Miller's vision and ability to create a bi-partisan effort and organization to champion the common issues of more than 53,000 adults in Wake County, of more than 800,000 adults in North Carolina and 11.6 million adults in the United States," **Wake Technical Community College President, Dr. Stephen C. Scott** said.

"The formation of this caucus raises the awareness of community colleges in Congress," **Rocki**

### **ingham Community College President, Dr. Robert C. Keys**

said. "Community colleges play a vital role in education and economic development across the country."

"Congressman Miller's awareness of the value of North Carolina's community colleges is being projected throughout the nation through the initiation of the Community College Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives," **Piedmont Community College President, Dr. James Owen** said. "We at Piedmont Community College are excited with Congressman Miller's enthusiasm and vision."

"Congressman Miller's efforts to bring community college issues to the forefront by initiating the Community College Caucus can only benefit the millions of students currently attending community colleges," **Alamance Community College President, Dr. Martin H. Nadelman** said. "We applaud his foresight and look forward to working with Congress and caucus members in highlighting our unique mission in higher education."

**Miller** continued: "Our hope for the future is to have the most skilled workers in the world. Our children cannot leave high school without a degree the way so many of their parents did. And when they get their degree, they need to know that their education is just beginning."

Joining Miller as co-chairs of the caucus are **Reps. Mike Castle (R-DE), David Wu (D-OR)** and **Ro**  
**ger Wicker (R-MS)**

. The caucus currently has 62 members.

### **Community College Facts:**

- Community colleges provide a low cost, close-to-home education to more than 11.9 million students a
- There are over 1,157 public and private community colleges in the United States
- In 2003, people who had an associates degree earned 22% more than those with only a high school o

- 65% of new health care workers get their training at community colleges.
- 95% of businesses and organizations that use them recommend community college workforce education.